

Text of Cuban Ambassador's Speech

Moscow in Spanish to South America 0200 GMT 10 November 1962--W

(Recorded speech by Carlos Olivares Sanchez, Cuban ambassador to USSR, made in Moscow Hall of Columns on 9 November)

(Text) Dear Comrades and Friends: In the first place, I must confess my pleasant surprise when the speech of the Cuban comrade was announced. I told my translator that he could have a rest, as it turned out that the Cuban comrade was speaking in excellent Russian.

I am pleased by this as a Cuban and as the representative of the Cuban Government in the Soviet Union. We are pleased to have heard Comrade Zelenko, chairman of the State Committee for Vocational and Technical Education, make reference to the high achievement of all the Cuban comrades whose departure from the Soviet Union is the occasion of this meeting. We are pleased at the demonstrations of solidarity and affection toward the Cuban people expressed by Soviet comrades this evening, at the shouts of "Long live Cuba!" and the thunderous applause of Soviet workers who paid tribute here to our fatherland.

Worries of the Soviet Union, all this makes us meditate, makes us think deeply. We mentally return to those tragic times of the subjugation of our country to U.S. imperialism. We asked ourselves then: Who knows Cuba? Who, at so many miles distant from our island could shout "Long live Cuba" or could raise his arms to acclaim and applaud our people? And this is logical and understandable, comrades and friends. Colonies are not acclaimed, slaves are not applauded.

But when Cuba achieved its independence and sovereignty, when Cuba no longer was a colony, when our people were able to attain, at the price of sacrifices and much honest blood, their freedom and full enjoyment of citizenship, Cuba also conquered a place of honor in the world, and among all the peoples of the world our nation also has a place of honor.

And we remembered, in these moving moments, how our country, 90 miles away from the shores of U.S. imperialism, suffered its first imperialist blockade, a blockade and siege of ignorance, a blockade of starvation and poverty, a blockade of exploitation and cruel oppression, a blockade which meant castration of our sovereignty and our independence. But our people, on 1 January 1959, broke this blockade, and our nation opened up wonderful horizons. The destiny of our nation for the first time seemed to be bright, steady, and secure.

It is true that the United States has broken diplomatic relations with us. It is true that, together with U.S. imperialism, accomplices in America and elsewhere in the world have also given (proof?) of hostility to our fatherland. But if it is also very true, comrades and friends, that Cuba had definitely conquered the heart and the affection of all the peoples of our Hispanic America, the love and affection of all the peoples who love progress and freedom in the world.

But what is even more important, Cuba has acquired the most absolute and full solidarity with all the members of the powerful socialist camp, and at the head of this camp, which already victorious in the world, Cuba has the solidarity and support of the invincible Soviet Union. (Applause)

The support and solidarity of the Soviet Union and the nations of the socialist camp are no more or less Cuban comrades, especially, please understand this well--than the correct interpretation of the formidable Leninist principle of proletarian internationalism. (Applause) It is the fraternal embrace, theoretically and practically, of all the workers and peasants of the world. It is the fraternal and sincere embrace of Soviet workers and peasants and Cuban workers and peasants.

Our island today is surrounded by steel, a real curtain of hostility. But who can doubt that this blockade of today, like the previous blockades, will also be overcome by Cuba with its heroic slogan of "Fatherland or Death!" (Applause)

Cuba is a peaceful nation, and like all the peoples of the world ours are peaceloving. Cuba works for peace. Cuba greets the Soviet people and their leaders in their great efforts to preserve peace. But Cuba wants it known and makes it clear with all revolutionary determination before the world, that we will never accept a peace involving violation of some of the basic rights of the nation. We want peace with full sovereignty, with absolute dignity. This is fully explained in the five historic points of Commander Fidel Castro, our leader and guide (applause) who exactly defined, to imperialism and the world, what true guarantees of nonaggression against our nation, offered by Kennedy, should be.

These five points have received not only the enthusiastic support of our people, not only the backing and support of all the peoples of the world who love progress and freedom, these five points and these guarantees have received--and it is a great joy for us to be able to say this--the full and complete backing of the Soviet Union, its people, and its government. (Applause)